

Loving our Xaverian vocation

*Behold, I will do something new!
Now it springs forth; will you not be aware of it?
(Is 43:19)*



Preparing the XVIII General Chapter

Issue n. 06 (February 2023)

Where we are heading to

*"Behold, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up, do you not perceive it?".*

Is. 43:19

Objective

To identify, with courage and creativity, those proposals and concrete decisions that we consider fundamental for the future of our missionary Family, in fidelity to the vocation received.

Inspirational text

The path that the XVI GC traced out, invited us **to restart, restructure, reposition**. These are indications full of hope, because they are intended to offer to our Family an itinerary that has the courage to review our presences and our activities and, above all, our capacity and readiness to renew ourselves according to the demands of the Mission in our time (XVII GC 2-3; cf. XVI GC 2 ; 6).

"Time is superior to space. This principle allows us to work for a long term, without the obsession of immediate results. It helps to bear with patience difficult and adverse situations, or the changes of plans that the dynamism of reality imposes. Giving priority to *space* leads to going crazy to solve everything in the present moment ... it means crystallising processes and pretending to stop them. Prioritising *time* means being more concerned with initiating processes than with possessing spaces. *Time* orders spaces, illuminates them and transforms them into links in a constantly growing chain, without backtracking... which then bear fruit in important historical events. Without anxiety, but with clear and tenacious convictions.



**XAVERIAN
MISSIONARIES**

Bukavu (DRC), July 2023
dg.saveriani.org



This criterion is also very appropriate for evangelisation, which requires keeping the horizon in mind, taking the possible processes and the long road. The Lord Himself in His earthly life made it clear many times to His disciples that there were things they could not yet understand and that it was necessary to wait for the Holy Spirit (cf. Jn 16:12-13) ...". (Cf. EG 222 - 225)

“One cannot **persevere in a fervent evangelisation** if he is not convinced, by virtue of his own experience, that it is not the same thing to have known Jesus or not to know him ... it is not the same thing to be able to listen to him or to ignore his Word ... It is not the same thing to try to build the world with his Gospel rather than to do it solely with our own reason. The true missionary, who never ceases to be a disciple, knows that Jesus walks with him, talks with him, breathes with him, works with him. If one does not discover Him present in the very heart of the missionary enterprise, he soon loses enthusiasm and ceases to be sure of what he is transmitting, he lacks strength and passion. And a person who is not convinced, enthusiastic, confident, in love, convinces no one”. (EG 266; cf. 264-267).

Presentation

On the way to the XVIII GC, we are weaving our sharing as **an exercise of discernment that projects us into the future**, which remains of God, but is also entrusted to us **today**, as a challenge and responsibility.

The previous thematic sheets (especially those on "*Where we are*" - sheets 2, 3, 4, 5) were related to the areas of our Family's life.

In trying to suggest concrete "attitudes" and orientations, we must not forget the inspiration of *the unique and exclusive missionary purpose*, the starting point and criterion for all future changes and planning.

Let us place the *starting point* and the *goal* against the backdrop of Isaiah's prophecy, the biblical icon of the next GC: "Behold, I am doing a new thing: right now it springs up, do you not perceive it?" (43:18-19). It is the new that comes into our lives and towards it we walk with confidence and hope. It is the motivation to leave the walls of *the fortified citadel*, in which we risk enclosing ourselves, to move towards a new horizon, grateful for the path we have travelled and aware that we are not starting from scratch. *Memento audere semper!*

Fundamental attitudes

Restart, restructure, and reposition. These are the verbs that the last GCs have repeatedly used to indicate the way forward. It must be emphasised that any change, any restructuring will only be effective if it is implemented with "*renewed Xaverians*" and not simply with "new" Xaverians. It is not enough to be content with changing personnel or structures, but every member of the Family must be renewed spiritually, humanly and 'professionally'. The *reform* of

the Congregation is not brought about by changing *people* - which certainly happens and will happen - but by conversion of *the people*. Hence, *ongoing formation* is not enough, *permanent conversion and purification* are also and above all necessary (cf. Pope Francis, 22 December 2016). The renewal of the mission requires the renewal of life, and this requires *a spirituality of change*, a real change of mentality so as not to render decisions, programmes and organisational efforts futile.

One *danger* of this sheet is that everyone thinks of the future exclusively in terms of his own area of missionary work. Here is the invitation: *let everyone seek the good of all*, of the entire Institute, so that *the whole prevails over the part*. In fact, "the whole is more than the parts, and is also more than their mere sum. Therefore, one must not be too obsessed with limited and particular matters. We must always widen our gaze to recognise a greater good that will benefit us all" (EG 235; cf. also EG 234-237).

Let us keep in mind the 4 principles proposed by Pope Francis: *time is superior to space; unity prevails over conflict; reality is more important than the idea; the whole is superior to the part*. To this we add the categories of *encounter and social friendship* from *Fratelli Tutti*. These are *different* parameters that privilege a more discreet, humble mission; founded more on the Word of the Cross, more on being than on doing; a mission capable of vision and *parresia*, thorough simplicity and precariousness, ... in

the line of the first missionaries and communities of the Acts of the Apostles.

What concrete choices and strategies on our horizon?

The GD has often asked in her visits: how do you see/think your Circumscription in 10/15 years? Even among Xaverians, there is an instinctive tendency to defend the *status quo*, sinning by procrastination and cowardice. There is fear to choose, to change, thus risking that events will decide for us, amid regrets and lamentations. What are the doors that are closing (*places, activities, priorities, personnel, leadership...*) and that we must let them close, and which ones are waiting to be opened?

The activities for the next Synod of Bishops, question us on how we learn to listen, discuss and decide according to the true good and according to the roles of each, perhaps without always wanting to please everyone! A growth in the synodal spirit and practice (*walking together*) will certainly strengthen collaboration within the Charismatic Family. Which kind of *leadership* in an Institute like ours, which is increasingly intercultural?

The pandemic has been painful and frustrating in so many ways. During this period, we have also discovered communication technologies which, by opening up to new methodologies of apostolic work, make it possible to effectively reach many people with whom we had no contact, as well as improving certain structures of communion

Loving our Xaverian vocation

*Behold, I will do something new!
Now it springs forth; will you not be aware of it?
(Is 43:19)*



Preparing the XVIII General Chapter

Issue n. 06 (February 2023)

(secretariats, committees, cultural centres; ...). What kind of mission in the *digital world*?

Looking to the future, while the present worries, might seem a consoling and deceptive exercise. But it is simply our duty: to be artisans of our future, with passion, creativity and industriousness. How will this missionary *Family of mine* look like? What "transformation" is required of us as an Institute and as individual confreres, in order to continue serving the Gospel in our present time? What is essential (to continually *inspire us*) and what is not (to courageously *cut it out*)? These questions are the inevitable consequence of the commitment of each one of us in the present, so that our faith and mission may continue to flourish, even through the XVIII General Chapter.

Method

This sheet is designed for reflection in our local communities. After personal reflection, we answer the proposed questions, and

report them in writing by sending them **by 22 March 2023**,¹ to Frs. Eugenio and Fabien, coordinators of the *Preparation Committee*.

Questions

1. What are the fundamental attitudes to be cultivated in order to keep the faith and inspiration of St G.M. Conforti alive, and thus have the necessary 'resources' to renew our *being missionaries*?
2. What are the concrete choices (*places, areas, persons, activities ...*) urgently needed to ensure that our Family not only continues its service but is renewed and responds adequately to the future needs of the mission *ad gentes, ad extra and ad vitam*?

N.B. - *You can also take up one or more of the questions on the previous page.*

¹ Fr. Fabien T. Kalehezo: kalehezo@saveriani.org, Fr. Eugenio Pulcini: pulcini@saveriani.org and Fr. Faustino Turco: faustinturco@gmail.com

(Edited by the Preparatory Committee for the 18th General Chapter)